

## *Moedim Chanukah Festival of Dedication-Essay*

**John 10:22-23** – “It was winter, and Yeshua was in Jerusalem at the time of the Festival of Dedication, and he was walking in the Portico of Solomon inside the Temple.”

Chanukah (sometimes spelled Chanukkah, Hanukah, or Hanukkah) is celebrated each fall, generally between Thanksgiving Day and New Year’s Day. According to the scripture above, Yeshua was amongst the many who celebrated the yearly festival.

### **The Chanukah Holiday**

**Description:** Chanukah celebrates the cleansing and re-dedication of the Temple during the period of the Maccabees and the miracle of the Menorah staying lit for eight days despite having only one day’s supply of oil.

**Key Scripture:** *John 10:22-23* – “It was winter, and Yeshua was in Jerusalem at the time of the Festival of Dedication, and he was walking in the Portico of Solomon inside the Temple.”

**Date Of Holiday:** Kislev/Tevet (November/December) generally between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day.

**Key Words:** Lampstand, Light, Menorah

**Actions:** The Menorah candles are lit, starting with the center Shamash (servant) candle, and each subsequent candle is lit from the center candle.

**Fulfillment:** Yeshua is the Servant Candle.

### **Other Names**

The Hebrew word Chanukah [חֲנֻכָּה - H2598] means: dedication, or consecration.

It comes from the root word, chanak [חָנַךְ - H2596].

In Greek, the word is egkainia [ἐγκαίνια - G1456].

Chanukah: Can be spelled as: Chanukkah, Hanukah, or Hanukkah.

Chanukah is also called:

- **The Feast of Dedication:**  
Celebrates the cleansing and re-dedication of the Temple during the period of the Maccabees.
- **The Festival of Light:**  
Celebrates the miracle of the burning of the Menorah for eight days despite having only one day’s supply of oil.

### **The Meaning of Chanukah**

Chanukah was prophesied by Daniel: “In his place a despicable person will arise, on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred, but he will come in a time of tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue” (Daniel 11:21), and “Armed forces will come at his order and profane the sanctuary and fortress. They will abolish the daily burnt offering and set up the abomination that causes desolation” (Daniel 11:31).

- Chanukah prophesies events that transpired in the time of the Maccabees will transpire again during the Tribulation Period – that apostasy will again come in part from within the religious circle – the priests will give in to the political leader of the day; the Antichrist or Beast, who will set up another Abomination that causes Desolation.
- Chanukah is also a time of thanksgiving.
- Chanukah celebrates the restoration of the Holy Temple after its desecration by Antiochus IV, also known as Antiochus Epiphanes.
- Chanukah commemorates an important victory over tyranny.

### **The Historical Background**

Antiochus IV, also known as Antiochus Epiphanes, which means “god manifest” was one of the successors of Alexander the Great. He oppressed the Jews severely, placed a Hellenistic priest in the Temple, massacred many Jews, prohibited them from practicing circumcision and other rites, and desecrated the Temple by placing a statue of Zeus while sacrificing pigs on the altar in 167 BC. (Daniel and Yeshua reference this as the Abomination That Causes Desolation – **Daniel 9:27, Matthew 24:15, and Mark 13:14**). The Jews even had a nickname for Antiochus: “Epimames,” which means “the mad man”!

Many Jews chose to comply with the new laws, forsaking Torah to save their lives. Others stood fast to the covenant, and paid with their life for their convictions. Mattathias the Hasmonean, a Kohen (Priest), and his son Yehudah (Judah) Maccabaeus joined forces and were able to retake the temple. Upon doing so, they found only enough oil to keep the Menorah lit for one day but miraculously it burned for eight days, the time needed to prepare a fresh supply of oil for the Menorah. It was on the 25th day of Kislev, exactly three years after the first swine had been sacrificed on the altar, that

Yehudah and his men reinstated the daily burnt offerings to the Lord in 164 BC in memory of the cleansing of the Temple from the pollution of Antiochus IV.

The re-dedication of the Temple was celebrated for eight days, which came to be remembered and celebrated as the Festival of Chanukah. The festival centers around the lighting of the candles on the Menorah. Another tradition is called the Dreidel game, which commemorates when the Jews had to conceal that they were still studying Torah. They gathered in caves or private places, posted a lookout to let them know when the authorities were coming, and spun the dreidel. The dreidel is marked with four Hebrew letters: Nun, Gimmel, Heh, and Shin. The letters represent the Hebrew phrase, “*nes gadol hayah sham*”: “*a great miracle happened here.*”

The entire story of the abomination that causes desolation and the retaking and cleansing of the temple can be found in the *Apocrypha* in **Books 1-4 Maccabees**.

### **The Modern Background**

Each year, Jews light the candles on a nine branched Menorah called a chanukkah [חֲנֻכָּיָה].

The center candle, known as the Shamash [שמש] which means: attendant or servant, is raised higher than the other candles. This candle is lit first. All the other candles are lit from this center candle. The candles are progressively inserted into the Menorah, starting from the right and ending with the far left candle, but are lit on successive nights from left to right as one honors the newer thing first.

Chanukah is eight days long and is symbolic of something that is one step above the natural order, above nature and its limitations. The greatly outnumbered Maccabees’ resolve to battle the Greeks wasn’t logical or natural but took faith and courage that are not part of normal human nature. This resolve, therefore, merited a miracle higher than nature—a miracle that lasted eight days.

### **The Christian Background**

Yeshua is the light that has come into the world (**John 8:12, 9:5, 12:46**, etc).

Yahweh has not only the Temple in Jerusalem, but also has another Temple: Christians are the temple of the living word – believers in Him are a temple for Him, and He dwells in them. Like the Menorah in the stone Temple, Yeshua is the light in our temple of flesh. Yeshua is THE servant candle!

In ancient times, the Temple of Jerusalem was desecrated by pagan invaders. Without the presence of Yahweh’s Ruach Ha’Kodesh we become a temple of desecration, defiled, darkened, filled with idols . . . a temple created to be holy but fallen from its purpose.

The Mission Today: celebrate your own Chanukah, remove the idols, cleanse your chambers, rededicate and reconsecrate your temple to Yahweh / Yeshua, and the Ruach Ha’Kodesh – to Elohim.

### **The Prophetic Nature of Chanukah**

**Ecclesiastes 1:9** – “*What has been is what will be, what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.*”

**Genesis 12:3** – “*I will bless those who bless you, but I will curse anyone who curses you; and by you all the families of the earth will be blessed.*”

The Greek nation waged war against the Jews, trying to instill their philosophies and teachings into the Jewish mindset. It only lasted for a short time!

Eventually, Biblical faith would replace Greek paganism. As the Greeks had left the Temple of Jerusalem desolate, today the temples of the Greeks and their gods are abandoned.

The invasion of Antiochus Epiphanes and his Abomination of Desolation was just a shadow of the coming Abomination under the Antichrist or Beast. The desolation begins when an evil king sets up an idol in the holy place. Antiochus set up a statue of Zeus. The False Prophet will create an image of the Beast that all will be required to worship (**Revelation 13:14-15**).

Chanukah foretold the apostasy of Yahweh's people and foretells the future great apostasy of the people of the world. Just as the priests, rabbis, and people of ancient Israel turned away from Torah and embraced the ways of the Greek nation, so it will be during the Tribulation Period. People will abandon any worship of Yahweh and embrace the lies of the Beast and the False Prophet, worshipping them instead (**Daniel 9:27, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, Revelation 13:7-9**).

Alexander the Great and his generals tried to bring the Hellenistic culture to the entire world. During the Tribulation Period the Beast will try to form a One World Government, One World Religion, and One World Economy. They sought to merge all cultures into one and to compel everyone to abandon their faith. Any culture, faith, people, or person that stood in its way, it tried to stamp out. The Beast will try to do the same.

The Beast system will try to establish a global culture, persecute Yahweh's people, criminalize moral living, abolish the Bible, blaspheme the Name of God, desecrate all that is sacred, and prohibit observing the Sabbaths and other Biblical celebrations. The Beast system will try to merge all cultures into one and to compel everyone to abandon their faith. Any culture, faith, people, or person that stands in its way, it will stamp out. Just as in the days of Antiochus, many will abandon their faith in Yahweh and will take the Mark of the Beast.

Chanukah prophesies both an early Jewish apostasy and takeover, and a global apostasy and take over. Only the return of Yeshua will reverse this vile takeover, re-establish the Holy Temple and accomplish its re-dedication. Chanukah is a very specific prophecy of what has been and what is going to happen in the end times.

### Chanukah Lessons

- Everyone has a purpose – one is not to fail to stand up for Yahweh, his people, or, in this case, his Temple.
- Yahweh answers prayer – He is in control. Yahweh has covenanted with the Jewish people to be their God. Yahweh will not allow another to take his place, no matter how hard they try.
- Be Faithful To Yahweh in all you do – Bowing only to Yahweh may land you in trouble, but Yahweh is more than able to overcome any obstacles you face, even against principalities, powers, rulers, and the spiritually wicked in high places (Ephesians 6:12).
- Yahweh can turn mourning into joy – The Temple was retaken and rededicated.

### Interesting Correlations

In Matthew Chapters 24 and 25 we see many aspects of Chanukah being repeated.

- When Yeshua begins with the phrase of “*wars and rumors of wars*” the thoughts of his Jewish hearers would turn to Chanukah.
- When Yeshua speaks about “*many being offended and betraying each other*” and the “*love of many waxing cold*” his Jewish hearers would say: That's exactly what happened during Chanukah!
- When he speaks about seeing “*the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place*” his Jewish hearers would say: This is exactly what happened 170 years earlier during Chanukah!
- When Yeshua says, “*Then let them which are in Judea flee into the mountains*” these are the exact words of the Maccabees after they killed the officer of Antiochus.
- When Yeshua talks about the good and evil servants his Jewish hearers would say that during Chanukah there were faithful (good) Jews who held to the Torah and unfaithful (evil) ones who adhered to the Greek mindset.
- Finally, when Yeshua tells the parable about the wise and foolish virgins and the wise have oil to relight their lamps, his Jewish hearers would have immediately thought about the one day supply of oil that kept the Menorah lit for eight days during the time of the Maccabees: *It is Chanukah all over!*

**Luke 21:25** – “*There will be signs in sun and moon and stars . . .*”

According to some calculations it is possible that Yeshua was conceived on Chanukah. We all walk in darkness and need a miracle to uphold the light within. Only Yeshua can do so.

In 2013 Chanukah began in the evening on Wednesday, November 27th and ended on the evening of Thursday, December 5th. This is the last time that Chanukah and Thanksgiving will be celebrated on the same day for the next 75,000 years, according to [Mark Biltz](#) of El Shaddai Ministries.

Comet Ison, officially known as comet C/2012 S1, was also currently gracing our skies. It was hoped to become the brightest comet to grace our skies, even brighter than Venus, said some astronomers. It had already brightened by a factor of 10 since its initial sighting. Ison will swoop quite close to the Sun on November 28th which will enable it to light up

dramatically, “coincidentally” on the first day of Chanukah! Perhaps Yahweh lit his Chanukah candle in our heavens to signal the imminent return of Yeshua.

### **Chanukah Nightly Checklist**

**First night:** Scripture: Is 51:1-4; Proverbs 6:23; Matthew 25:1-4; Proverbs 13:9; Lamentations 2:9; Proverbs 29:18

Discuss: The importance of a new understanding of what Torah really means

Question: What was the light Messiah brought to the nations?

Prayer: That God would bring His light into any darkness in our own lives

**Second night:** Scripture: Psalm 119:1-24

Discuss: How living out the Torah is what makes us light in this dark world.

Question: What does Psalm 119:18 mean to you?

Prayer: That God would open our eyes to see wonderful things in His Torah!

**Third night:** Scripture: Psalm 119:25-48

Discuss: Having borders or fences to protect us is good not bad.

Question: What is the significance of Psalm 119:44,45?

Prayer: That we may see Torah as what God has given us to protect us.

**Fourth Night:** Scripture: Psalm 119:49-72

Discuss: What do we value more: riches or Torah

Question: What does Psalm 119:53 mean to you?

Prayer: That we may learn to put a higher value on what God says.

**Fifth Night:** Scripture: Psalm 119:73-96

Discuss: The faithfulness and longevity of God’s Word.

Question: What does Psalm 119:89-91 mean to you?

Prayer: That God would settle His Word in each of our lives.

**Sixth Night:** Scripture: Psalm 119:97-120

Discuss: How God’s Word is what lights our path so we won’t fall.

Question: What does Psalm 119:103-105 mean to you?

Prayer: That the anointing of the Messiah would fuel the flames of our faith, illuminating the Kingdom of God to those around us so they won’t fall.

**Seventh Night:** Scripture: Psalm 119:121-14

Discuss: Why does God’s servant want God to go to work

Question: What does Psalm 119:125,126,135,136 mean to you?

Prayer: That we can comprehend our new identity, respond to the call to be lights and recognize our servant-hood to the King.

**Eighth Night:** Scripture: Psalm 119:145-176

Discuss: Peace comes from Torah

Question: What does Psalm 119:165-167 mean to you?

Prayer: Pray the Lord help you be a shining light in Yeshua.